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# A Royal Rake's Progress—Even Faster Than King Leopold's

*His Highness of Orleans, Claimant to France's Throne, Royalty's Disgrace, Jilted, Spanked, Kicked, Boycotted by Society, Chief Spendthrift of the Brussels "White Way," Now Sued by His Wife for Wasting Her Property*



Madame Auffmordt, Otherwise Countess de Salverte, the Beautiful Society Woman at Present the Principal Object of the Fickle Duke's Devotion.

Brussels, June 20. A NEW disgrace has crowned the career of Europe's uncrowned royal rake, the Duke of Orleans.

His wife, the former Archduchess Maria Dorothea of Austria, has sued him for a separation and an accounting for her property, most of which he has squandered on worthless parasites. Such a proceeding by a Catholic Princess is almost unheard of, and proves the outrageousness of the Duke's conduct.

His Highness is the royalist pretender to the throne of France, the head of the French Bourbons. His great-grandfather was King Louis Philippe of France, and his great-grandfather was the Duke of Orleans, who voted for the execution of his own cousin, King Louis XVI, in the French Revolution. Although without a throne the Duke is the head of the most historic royal house in the world.

The Duke is now living near Brussels, having made England and other countries too warm for him. He trained at Brussels under the guidance of the late King Leopold, and has already surpassed the wicked doings of that monarch in many ways. Although he is not charged with the crimes of Leopold, he has far outstripped him in extravagance, riotous living, shameless public exhibition of himself with parasites of both sexes, and general sensual profligacy.

Orleans prides himself greatly on his resemblance to his famous ancestor, Henri Quatre, the hero of Macaulay's lines:

"Look where you see my white plume shine amid the ranks of war, And he your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre."

Henry of Navarre was not more distinguished in war than for his generosity to his many fair favorites. The Duke of Orleans has never distinguished himself in war and is never likely to, but in the other matter he has beaten his famous ancestor.

Like Henry of Navarre he has a long nose, a high, full cheekbone and a singularly sensual expression of face. In order to lighten the resemblance the Duke trims his hair and whiskers in exactly the same manner as his illustrious forbear, and spends hours at this occupation surrounded by busts and portraits of the old King.

When he was a very young man the Duke was intensely devoted to

Mme. Melba, the noted operatic singer. She suggested to him a way of making himself a hero in France. There is a law forbidding a pretender to the throne or his direct heir to reside in France. The Duke went to a provincial town under an assumed name and declared that he had come to perform his regular military service. He was accepted by the local officers, but in about twenty-four hours they discovered who he was.

He was put under arrest, but the Government felt embarrassed, for it was an awkward thing to imprison a young man for trying to do his duty to his country. That was just what he and his royalist friends expected. Their newspapers began to print indignant articles about the shame of keeping the young Prince in a vile dungeon for the crime of trying to serve his beloved Fatherland.

Sympathetic Mme. Melba went to see him in his dungeon. The crafty French Prime Minister noted this,

he descendant of Henry of Navarre might be seen any night in the cafes of Brussels behaving riotously with persons of unquestionable reputation."

Ninette des Melays, One of His Former Favorites Wearing the Duke's Family Jewels Which He Gave Her.

"His three handsome sisters, ex-Queen Amelie of Portugal, Princess Helene, and Princess Louise are deeply distressed by his conduct."



"A party of indignant Englishmen waylaid the Duke and spanked him for insulting Queen Victoria."

him while he was taking a quiet stroll at San Sebastian, the Spanish watering place, and gave him a thorough spanking. He then tried Wiesbaden as a health resort, but a stout German whose wife he had been trifling with sought an interview with him, and, as a result, he was unable to sit down or move about with comfort for three weeks.

The Duke then found the gay capital of Brussels more

"The Duke Trained in Brussels with the late King Leopold, and the old sinner taught the young rake all he knew."

The Duke of Orleans, Royal Rake and Claimant of France's Throne, in Court Dress.

to his liking. He began to go there in the time of old King Leopold. Together they frequented the cafes and cabarets and side doors of theatres. The old sinner taught the young rake all he knew.

The Duke had severed his friendship with Mme. Melba, and this seems to have marked a downward turn in his career. At Brussels his favorite companion was Ninette des Melays, a very pretty, but vulgar, Parisian actress.

Surrounded by Ninette and men and women of similar position the descendant of Henri IV. would sit in the public cafes of Brussels drinking, singing, shouting at the top of his voice and enjoying the homage of his peculiar courtiers.

Ninette des Melays directed his political policy. She made him tell the dignified noblemen who represented him in the various departments of France that they were slow-going old fogies.

Ninette dropped a magnificent pearl necklace in a Brussels restaurant and it was returned by a Belgian woman who had seen her wearing it. This incident led to the disclosure that the Duke had given the actress most of the splendid jewels inherited from his great-grandmother, Queen Marie Amelie of France.

His wife, who had the right to

wear them, ransomed them at great expense from the actress, using the last of her own money and borrowing more from her family for this purpose. She brought \$300,000 to the Duke on her marriage, and practically all of this has been squandered. Both she and her mother have been ruined financially by him.

His conduct has caused the most intense distress to his three handsome sisters, ex-Queen Amelie of Portugal, Princess Helene, Duchess of Aosta, and Princess Louise, wife of Prince Charles of Bourbon.

These princesses induced King George and Queen Mary to pay the Duke a visit at Wood Norton two years ago as a token that they forgave him and recognized that he was trying to do better. Now, Queen Mary is naturally furious at the reports of what he is doing at Brussels.

No one favorite has ever held the Duke's interest for very long. There are many of them, but one is rather more conspicuous than the others for a period, and then passes into obscurity. So it was with Ninette des Melays. She is no longer seen in his society.

The latest object of his admiration is a remarkable woman, Mme. Auffmordt. She belongs to an excellent family of the French aristocracy, and before her marriage was Countess Baconiere de Salverte. She then married a wealthy manufacturer of German origin. She has been very much with the American set on the Continent, and this has even given rise to the report that she is an American. For her he has rented a charming chateau at Putdael, near Brussels.

They give amazing banquets, where, after a hearty consumption of wine, plans are made to destroy the French republic. Instead of being a danger to the republic the Duke has really become a walking disgrace to royalty.

The very latest report is that the Duke will run away from his troubles by taking ship for foreign parts under an assumed name with his charmer.



cause she was the only consort of royal rank he could find. She was a good, pious woman, but she was two years older than her husband, sickly, shy, and quite unable to hold such a rake as he to his own fireside. They made their principal residence at Wood Norton, the Duke's splendid English estate, near Evesham, in Worcestershire. A fervent admirer of royalty describing this place says:

"The Duchess is a beautiful painter, and the mansion is filled with her paintings. One shows an angel bearing the emblems of the Royal House of France to heaven on a cushion surrounded by cherubs. A companion piece shows the Duke in shooting costume, with the trophies of the chase at his feet."

From the first day the Duke neglected his wife outrageously. Even the paintings did not hold him. It

